

CHAPTER 12  
GENERAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS  
(Applicable July 1, 1989)  
[Prior to 9/7/88, see Public Instruction Department[670] Ch 4]

PREAMBLE

The following standards are the minimum requirements that must be met by an Iowa public school district to be accredited. A public school district that does not maintain accreditation shall be merged by the state board of education with one or more contiguous school districts as required by Iowa Code subsection 256.11(12). A nonpublic school must meet the standards if it wishes to be designated as accredited for operation in Iowa. The standards are intended to fulfill the state's responsibility for making available an appropriate educational opportunity for each child of school age in Iowa. They are designed to ensure that each child has access to educational programs essential to the needs and abilities of the child regardless of race, sex, disability, language, socioeconomic background, or geographic location. No public school district, or a nonpublic school desiring to be accredited, is required to meet the provisions of this chapter prior to July 1, 1989.

DIVISION I  
GENERAL STANDARDS

**281—12.1(256) General standards.**

**12.1(1) *Educational units governed by standards.*** These standards govern the accreditation of all prekindergarten, if offered, or kindergarten through grade twelve school districts operated by public school corporations and the accreditation, if requested, of prekindergarten or kindergarten through grade twelve schools operated under nonpublic auspices. "School" means prekindergarten, if offered, and any organizational pattern of kindergarten through grade twelve of an elementary-secondary education program. Equal opportunity in programs shall be provided to all students regardless of race, national origin, sex, or disability. Each board shall take affirmative steps to integrate students in attendance centers and courses. In order to monitor progress, district, attendance centers, and course enrollment, data shall be collected on the basis of race, national origin, sex and disability, and reviewed and updated annually.

**12.1(2) *School board.*** Each school or school district shall be governed by an identifiable authority which shall exercise the functions necessary for the effective operation of the school and referred to in these rules as the "board."

**12.1(3) *Application for accreditation.*** The board of any school or school district that is not accredited on the effective date of these standards and which seeks accreditation shall file an application with the director, department of education, on or before the first day of January of the school year preceding the school year for which accreditation is sought.

**12.1(4) *Accredited schools and school districts.*** Each school or school district receiving accreditation under the provisions of these standards shall remain accredited except when by action of the state board of education it is removed from the list of accredited schools maintained by the department of education in accordance with Iowa Code subsections 256.11(11) and 256.11(12).

**12.1(5) *When nonaccredited.*** A school district shall be nonaccredited on the day after the date it is removed from the list of accredited schools by action of the state board of education. A nonpublic school shall be nonaccredited on the date established by the resolution of the state board, which shall be no later than the end of the school year in which the nonpublic school is declared to be nonaccredited.

**12.1(6) *Exemption request.*** A board may request from the director of the department of education exemption from one or more of the requirements of the educational program specified in Iowa Code subsection 256.11(5). The request shall meet all requirements of Iowa Code subsection 256.11(8) and shall be granted only if the director determines that it is part of a planned, innovative curriculum project meeting the educational needs and interests of pupils and is broadly consistent with the intent of the educational program as defined in Iowa Code subsection 256.11(5). The director shall require an annual renewal of the exemption; any renewal of the exemption shall be at the discretion of the director.

An exemption request may also be made under the guidelines specified in Iowa Code subsection 256.9(51). See information provided in rule 281—12.8(256).

**12.1(7) *Alternative provisions for accreditation.*** School districts may meet accreditation requirements through the provisions of Iowa Code sections 256.13, nonresident pupils; 273.7A, services to school districts; 279.20, superintendent—term; 280.15, joint employment and sharing; 282.7, attending in another corporation—payment; and 282.10, whole grade sharing. Nonpublic schools may meet accreditation requirements through the provisions of Iowa Code section 256.12.

DIVISION II  
DEFINITIONS

**281—12.2(256) *Definitions.*** For purposes of these accreditation standards, the following definitions shall be used.

**12.2(1) *Minimum school calendar and day of instruction.*** Each board shall adopt a school calendar that identifies specific days for student instruction, staff development and in-service time, and time for parent-teacher conferences. The length of the school calendar does not dictate the length of contract or employment days for individual instructional and noninstructional staff. The school calendar may be operated anytime during the school year of July 1 to June 30 as defined by Iowa Code section 279.10. A minimum of 180 days of the school calendar, for school districts beginning no sooner than a day during the calendar week in which the first day of September falls, shall be used for student instruction. These days shall meet the definitions of “day of school” in subrule 12.2(2), “minimum school day” in subrule 12.2(3), and “day of attendance” in subrule 12.2(4). (Exception: A school or school district may, by board policy, excuse graduating seniors up to five days of instruction after school or district requirements for graduation have been met.) If additional days are added to the regular school calendar because of inclement weather, a graduating senior who has met the school’s requirements for graduation may be excused from attendance during the extended school calendar. Of the remaining days in the school calendar, a minimum of 20 days, excluding vacation and holidays, shall be used as determined by the board for other educational purposes involving instructional and noninstructional staff.

**12.2(2) *Day of school.*** A day of school is a day during which the school or school district is in session and pupils are under the guidance and instruction of the instructional professional staff. School shall be considered in session during parent-teacher conferences as well as during activities such as field trips if pupils are engaged in school programs or activities under the guidance and direction of the instructional professional staff. All grade levels of the school or school district must be operated and available for attendance by all pupils. An exception is if either the elementary or secondary grades are closed provided that this time is made up at some other point during the school calendar so as to meet the minimum of 180 days of instruction for all grade levels 1 through 12. If a classroom or attendance center is closed for emergency health or safety reasons but the remainder of the school or school district is in operation, the day may be counted as a day of school.

**12.2(3) *Minimum school day.*** A school day shall consist of a minimum of five and one-half hours of instructional time for all grades one through twelve. The minimum hours shall be exclusive of the lunch period. Passing time between classes as well as time spent on parent-teacher conferences may be counted as part of the five and one-half hour requirement. The school or school district may record a day of school with less than the minimum instructional hours if emergency health or safety factors require the late arrival or early dismissal of pupils on a specific day; or if the total hours of instructional time for all grades one through twelve in any five consecutive school days equal a minimum of 27½ hours, even though any one day of school is less than the minimum instructional hours because of a staff development opportunity provided for the instructional professional staff or because parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day.

Furthermore, if the total hours of instructional time for the first four consecutive days equal at least 27½ hours because parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day, a school or school district may record 0 hours of instructional time on the fifth consecutive school day as a minimum school day.

**12.2(4) *Day of attendance.*** A day of attendance shall be a day during which a pupil was present and under the guidance and instruction of the instructional professional staff. A pupil shall not be counted in attendance during school calendar days designated by the board for licensed/certificated staff in-service programs unless these are conducted outside the time required for a “minimum school day.” (Note exceptions in subrules 12.2(2) and 12.2(3).)

**12.2(5) *Enrolled pupil.*** A pupil shall be considered enrolled after registering with the school or school district and taking part in the educational program.

**12.2(6) *Kindergarten program.*** A kindergarten program complying with the educational program description in subrule 12.5(2) shall be operated by a school district. A nonpublic school is not required to offer kindergarten in order to be accredited. The number of instructional days within the school calendar and the length of the school day for kindergarten shall be defined by the board.

DIVISION III  
ADMINISTRATION

**281—12.3(256) Administration.** The following standards shall apply to the administration of accredited schools and school districts.

**12.3(1) *Board records.*** Each board shall adopt by written policy a system for maintaining accurate records. The system shall provide for recording and maintaining the minutes of all board meetings, coding all receipts and expenditures, and recording and filing all reports required by the Iowa Code or requested by the director of the department of education. Financial records of school districts shall be maintained in a manner as to be easily audited according to accepted accounting procedures.

**12.3(2) *Policy manual.*** The board shall develop and maintain a policy manual which provides a codification of its policy actions with the adoption date, the review date, and any revision date of each. Policies shall be reviewed at least every three years to ensure relevance to current practices and compliance with the Iowa Code, administrative rules and decisions, and court decisions.

**12.3(3) *Needs assessment, statement of philosophy, and long-range plans.*** The board, in compliance with Iowa Code section 280.12 and as a standard for accreditation, shall adopt and implement a process for conducting an ongoing needs assessment for the school or school district. Information obtained from this process shall be used by the board, in conjunction with other data, to establish and update both long- and short-range plans which include specific goals for meeting the identified needs. The purpose of the assessment process is twofold: first, to assist the board in developing and evaluating a statement of philosophy for the school or school district; and second, to determine the areas of student performance, knowledge, and attitudes which are judged to be most crucial in meeting school or district goals. This process, for school districts, shall comply with Iowa Code section 280.18 requiring the adoption of goals to improve student achievement and performance. As part of its assessment the board shall develop a process for communicating with business, industry, labor, and higher education regarding their expectations for adequate student preparation.

The statement of philosophy shall describe the board's beliefs about topics which shall include, but need not be limited to, the nature of learning, the purpose of the school or school district, the scope of educational experiences that the school or school district should provide, the nature of its learners, and a description of a desirable learning atmosphere.

While there are various procedures or models that may be used in conducting a needs assessment, the following basic steps shall be included. School goals shall be identified and stated in terms of what learners should be able to perform as a result of their schooling. The board shall determine which of these goals represent learning that would help the majority of the students in each course assume responsibilities as citizens, parents, and wage earners. Such identified goals shall be called basic skills and should be given the highest priority. School staff, students, parents, and community members shall recommend courses to be offered above requirements established by subrules 12.5(1) to 12.5(5) and within the optional areas described in subrule 12.5(5), paragraphs "g," "h," and "i." Recommendations of this committee shall primarily reflect both the identified needs and resources of the school or school district. Assessment procedures, including those persons responsible for assessment, shall be identified for goals in the basic skills areas, and performance criteria shall be established and reviewed.

In identifying school goals, specific consideration shall be given to the five-year plan for the achievement of educational goals in Iowa developed by the state board of education as required by Iowa Code subsection 256.7(4).

As part of its needs assessment policy the board shall include provisions for keeping its various publics regularly informed of its policies, procedures, programs, and planning for the school or school district. This policy shall ensure involvement and consultation with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and representatives from the community in developing the various processes required by Iowa Code section 280.12.

**12.3(4) *Personnel evaluation.*** Each board shall adopt a performance evaluation process for school personnel. Personnel evaluation processes of school districts shall conform to Iowa Code sections 272.33, 279.14 and 279.23A.

**12.3(5) *Instructional time audit.*** Nullified by 1993 General Assembly in HJR 19, effective April 20, 1993.

**12.3(6) *Student records.*** Each board shall require its administrative staff to establish and maintain a system of pupil records. This system shall include for each pupil a permanent office record and a cumulative record.

The permanent office record shall serve as a historical record of official information concerning the pupil's education. At a minimum it should reflect evidence of attendance and educational progress, provide an official transcript, have all base data for use in planning to meet educational needs, and provide all data for official school reports. This record is to be permanently maintained and stored in a fire-resistant safe or vault.

The cumulative record shall provide a continuous and current record of significant information on progress and growth. It should reflect information such as courses taken, scholastic progress, school attendance, physical and health record, experiences, interests, aptitudes, attitudes, abilities, honors, extracurricular activities, part-time employment, and future plans. It is the “working record” used by the instructional professional staff in understanding the pupil. At the request of a receiving school or school district, a copy of the cumulative record shall be sent to officials of that school when a pupil transfers.

For the sole purpose of implementing an interagency agreement with state and local agencies in accordance with 1997 Iowa Acts, Senate File 515, section 39, a pupil’s permanent record may include information contained in the cumulative record as defined above.

The board shall adopt a policy concerning the accessibility and confidentiality of pupil records that complies with the provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, and Iowa Code chapter 22.

**12.3(7) *Standards for graduation.*** Each board providing a program through grade twelve shall adopt a policy establishing the requirements students must meet for high school graduation. This policy shall make provision for early graduation and shall be consistent with these standards and the Iowa Code.

**12.3(8) *Student responsibility and discipline.*** The board shall adopt student responsibility and discipline policies. In developing or revising such policies, the board shall involve parents, students, instructional and noninstructional professional staff, and community members. Student responsibility and discipline policies shall relate to the educational purposes of the school or school district. The policies shall include, but need not be limited to, attendance; use of tobacco and the use or possession of alcoholic beverages or any controlled substance; violent, destructive, and seriously disruptive behavior; suspension, expulsion, emergency removal, corporal punishment, and physical restraint; out-of-school behavior; participation in extracurricular activities; academic progress; and citizenship.

In developing and applying student responsibility and discipline policies, the board shall ensure due process rights for students and parents. In some instances this may require developing separate policies for students who have been identified as requiring special education programs and services.

The board shall also consider the potential of a disparate impact on students by virtue of race, sex, disability, or national origin.

The board shall publicize its support of these policies; its support of the staff in enforcing them; and the staff’s accountability for implementing them.

**12.3(9) *Health services.*** The board shall adopt a policy for the implementation of a school health services program. The program shall be designed to help each student protect, improve, and maintain physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Areas to be considered in the development of a policy could include, but not necessarily be limited to: environmental health and safety; emergency health procedures and responsibilities; health promotion; communicable disease prevention and control; staffing for the school health program; administering of prescription medication; acute or chronic health problems; and health assessment and screening; and record keeping and program evaluation.

The program shall include the provision of special health services. The definitions and procedures found at 281—41.96(256B) and 281—subrules 41.96(1), 41.96(2) and 41.12(11) shall be used in implementing the program required by this subrule.

The special health services definition includes routine insertion health procedures, also called “intrusive nonemergency” health services. Special health services does not include routine procedures such as noninsertion first aid, defined as treatment to injured or sick persons before professional health care is available, and noninsertion medication administration. School employees, with the exception of licensed health professionals and individuals hired specifically for those purposes, may refuse to provide special health services. Qualified designated personnel, pursuant to rule 281—41.96(256B), other than licensed health personnel, shall be presumed to agree to provide the special health service unless presenting to district personnel a signed written refusal to provide such service.

**12.3(10) *Audit of school funds.*** This standard applies only to public school districts. The results of the annual audit of all public school district funds conducted by the state auditor or a private auditing firm shall be made part of the official records of the board.

**12.3(11) *School system organizational structure.*** The board shall officially adopt an organizational structure for the school(s) under its jurisdiction. This action shall be recorded in its minutes.

**12.3(12) *Report on accredited nonpublic school instruction.*** Between September 1 and October 1 of each year the secretary of each public school district board shall request from each accredited nonpublic school located within its boundaries a report of private school instruction as required by Iowa Code section 299.3. Each accredited nonpublic school shall submit the required report in duplicate. The secretary of the public school board shall send one copy to the board secretary of the area education agency within which the public school district is located.

Within ten days of receipt of notice, each accredited nonpublic school shall send a report to the secretary of the public school district within which the accredited nonpublic school is located. This report shall conform to the requirements of Iowa Code section 299.3.

DIVISION IV  
SCHOOL PERSONNEL

**281—12.4(256) School personnel.** License/certificate and endorsement standards required in this rule relate to licenses/certificates and endorsements issued by the state board of educational examiners. The following standards shall apply to personnel employed in accredited schools.

**12.4(1) *Instructional professional staff.*** Each person who holds a license/certificate endorsed for the service for which that person is employed shall be eligible for classification as a member of the instructional professional staff.

**12.4(2) *Noninstructional professional staff.*** A person who holds a statement of professional recognition, including but not limited to a physician, dentist, nurse, speech therapist, or a person in one of the other noninstructional professional areas designated by the state board of education, shall be eligible for classification as a member of the noninstructional professional staff.

**12.4(3) *Basis for approval of professional staff.*** Each member of the professional staff shall be classified as either instructional or noninstructional. An instructional professional staff member shall be regarded as approved when holding either an appropriate license/certificate with endorsement or endorsements, or a license/certificate with an endorsement statement, indicating the specific teaching assignments that may be given. A noninstructional professional staff member shall be regarded as approved when holding a statement of professional recognition for the specific type of noninstructional professional school service for which employed.

**12.4(4) Required administrative personnel.** Each board that operates both an elementary school and a secondary school shall employ as its executive officer and chief administrator a person who holds a license/certificate endorsed for service as a superintendent. The board of a school district may meet this requirement by contracting with its area education agency for “superintendency services” as provided by Iowa Code section 273.7A. The individual employed or contracted for as superintendent may serve as elementary principal in that school or school district provided that the superintendent holds the proper licensure/certification but cannot also serve as a high school principal in that school or school district. For purposes of this subrule, high school means a school which commences with either grade 9 or grade 10, as determined by the board of directors of the school district, or by the governing authority of the nonpublic school in the case of nonpublic schools. Boards of school districts may jointly employ a superintendent, provided such arrangements comply with the provisions of Iowa Code subsection 279.23(4).

**12.4(5) Staffing policies—elementary schools.** The board operating an elementary school shall develop and adopt staffing policies designed to attract, retain, and effectively utilize competent personnel. Each board operating an elementary school shall employ at least one elementary principal. This position may be combined with that of secondary principal or with a teaching assignment at the elementary or secondary level, provided the individual holds the proper licenses/certificates and endorsements.

When grades seven and eight are part of an organized and administered junior high school, the staffing policies adopted by the board for secondary schools shall apply. When grades seven and eight are part of an organized and administered middle school, the staffing policies adopted by the board for elementary schools shall apply.

**12.4(6) Staffing policies—secondary schools.** The board operating a secondary school shall develop and adopt staffing policies designed to attract, retain, and effectively utilize competent personnel. Each board operating a secondary school shall employ at least one secondary principal. This position may be combined with that of elementary principal or with a teaching assignment at the elementary or secondary level, provided the individual holds the proper licenses/certificates and endorsements. This position cannot be combined with that of superintendent.

**12.4(7) Principal.** “Principal” means a licensed/certificated member of a school’s instructional staff who serves as an instructional leader, coordinates the process and substance of educational and instructional programs, coordinates the budget of the school, provides formative evaluation for all practitioners and other persons in the school, recommends or has effective authority to appoint, assign, promote, or transfer personnel in a school building, implements the local school board’s policy in a manner consistent with professional practice and ethics, and assists in the development and supervision of a school’s student activities program.

**12.4(8) Teacher.** A teacher shall be defined as a member of the instructional professional staff who holds a license/certificate endorsed for the type of position in which employed. A teacher diagnoses, prescribes, evaluates, and directs student learnings in terms of the school’s objectives, either singly or in concert with other professional staff members; shares responsibility with the total professional staff for developing educational procedures and student activities to be used in achieving the school’s objectives; supervises educational aides who assist in serving students for whom the teacher is responsible; and evaluates or assesses student progress during and following instruction in terms of the objectives sought, and uses this information to develop further educational procedures.

**12.4(9) Educational aide.** An educational aide shall be defined as an employee or volunteer who, in the presence or absence of an instructional professional staff member but under the direction, supervision, and control of the instructional professional staff, supervises students on a monitorial or service basis; and works with students in a supportive role under conditions determined by the instructional professional staff responsible for the students, but not as a substitute for or a replacement of functions and duties of a teacher as established in subrule 12.4(8).

During the initial year of employment, an educational aide shall complete an in-service training program approved by the board as provided in subrule 12.7(1).

**12.4(10) *Record of license/certificate or statement of professional recognition.*** The board shall require each administrator, teacher, support service staff member, and noninstructional professional staff member on its staff to supply evidence that each holds a license/certificate or statement of professional recognition which is in force and valid for the type of position in which employed.

**12.4(11) *Record required regarding teacher and administrative assignments.*** The board shall require its superintendent or other designated administrator to maintain a file for all regularly employed members of the instructional professional staff, including substitute teachers. The file shall consist of complete official transcripts of the preparation of these staff members and their legal licenses/certificates or copies thereof showing that they are eligible for the position in which employed. The official shall also maintain on file a legal license/certificate or statement of professional recognition as defined in subrule 12.4(2) for each member of the noninstructional professional staff. These records shall be on file at the beginning of and throughout each school year and shall be updated annually to reflect all professional growth.

On December 1 of each year, the official shall verify to the department of education the licensure/certification and endorsement status of each member of the instructional and administrative staff. This report shall be on forms provided by the department of education and shall identify all persons holding conditional authorizations and their specific assignment(s) with the conditional authorization(s).

**12.4(12) *Nurses.*** Each board that employs a nurse shall require a current license to be filed with the superintendent or other designated administrator as specified in subrule 12.4(10).

**12.4(13) *Prekindergarten staff.*** Prekindergarten teachers shall hold a license/certificate valid for the prekindergarten level. The board shall employ personnel as necessary to provide effective supervision and instruction in the prekindergarten program.

**12.4(14) *Physical examination.*** Except as otherwise provided in 281—43.15(285), the local board shall require each employee to file with it certification of fitness to perform the tasks assigned which shall be in the form of a written report of a physical examination, including a check for tuberculosis, by a licensed physician and surgeon, osteopathic physician and surgeon, osteopath, or qualified doctor of chiropractic, licensed physician assistant, or advanced registered nurse practitioner. A report shall be filed at the beginning of service and at three-year intervals.

Each doctor of chiropractic licensed as of July 1, 1974, shall affirm on each certificate of physical examination that the affidavit required by Iowa Code section 151.8 is on file with the Iowa board of chiropractic examiners.

**12.4(15) *Support staff.*** The board shall develop and implement procedures for the use of educational support staff to augment classroom instruction and to meet individual student needs. These staff members may be employed by the board or by the area education agency.

#### DIVISION V EDUCATION PROGRAM

**281—12.5(256) *Education program.*** The following education program standards shall be met by schools and school districts for accreditation with the start of the 1989-1990 school year.

**12.5(1) *Prekindergarten program.*** If a school offers a prekindergarten program, the program shall be designed to help children to work and play with others, to express themselves, to learn to use and manage their bodies, and to extend their interests and understanding of the world about them. The prekindergarten program shall relate the role of the family to the child's developing sense of self and perception of others. Planning and carrying out prekindergarten activities designed to encourage cooperative efforts between home and school shall focus on community resources. A prekindergarten teacher shall hold a license/certificate licensing/certifying that the holder is qualified to teach in prekindergarten. A nonpublic school which offers only a prekindergarten may, but is not required to, seek and obtain accreditation.



**12.5(2) Kindergarten program.** The kindergarten program shall include experiences designed to develop healthy emotional and social habits and growth in the language arts and communication skills, as well as a capacity for the completion of individual tasks, and protect and increase physical well-being with attention given to experiences relating to the development of life skills and human growth and development. A kindergarten teacher shall be licensed/certificated to teach in kindergarten. An accredited nonpublic school must meet the requirements of this subrule only if the nonpublic school offers a kindergarten program.

**12.5(3) Elementary program, grades 1-6.** The following areas shall be taught in grades one through six: English-language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, human growth and development, physical education, traffic safety, music, and visual art.

In implementing the elementary program standards, the following general curriculum definitions shall be used.

*a. English-language arts.* English-language arts instruction shall include the following communication processes: speaking; listening; reading; writing; viewing; and visual expression and nonverbal communication. Instruction shall incorporate language learning and creative, logical, and critical thinking. The following shall be taught: oral and written composition; communication processes and skills, including handwriting and spelling; literature; creative dramatics; and reading.

*b. Social studies.* Social studies instruction shall include citizenship education, history, and social sciences. Democratic beliefs and values, problem-solving skills, and social and political participation skills shall be incorporated. Instruction shall encompass geography, history of the United States and Iowa, and cultures of other peoples and nations. American citizenship, including the study of national, state, and local government; and the awareness of the physical, social, emotional and mental self shall be infused in the instructional program.

*c. Mathematics.* Mathematics instruction shall include number sense and numeration; concepts and computational skills with whole numbers, fractions, mixed numbers and decimals; estimation and mental arithmetic; geometry; measurement; statistics and probability; and patterns and relationships. This content shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and applications; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

*d. Science.* Science instruction shall include life, earth, and physical science and shall incorporate hands-on process skills; scientific knowledge; application of the skills and knowledge to students and society; conservation of natural resources; and environmental awareness.

*e. Health.* Health instruction shall include personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; substance abuse and nonuse, encompassing the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and poisons on the human body; human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; and prevention and control of disease, and the characteristics of communicable diseases, including acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

*f. Physical education.* Physical education instruction shall include movement experiences and body mechanics; fitness activities; rhythmic activities; stunts and tumbling; simple games and relays; sports skills and activities; and water safety.

*g. Traffic safety.* Traffic safety instruction shall include pedestrian safety; bicycle safety; auto passenger safety; school bus passenger safety; seat belt use; substance education; and the application of legal responsibility and risk management to these concepts.

*h. Music.* Music instruction shall include skills, knowledge, and attitudes and shall include singing and playing music; listening to and using music; reading and writing music; recognizing the value of the world's musical heritage; respecting individual musical aspirations and values; and preparing for consuming, performing, or composing.

*i. Visual art.* Visual art instruction shall include perceiving, comprehending, and evaluating the visual world; viewing and understanding the visual arts; developing and communicating imaginative and inventive ideas; and making art.

**12.5(4) Junior high program, grades 7 and 8.** The following shall be taught in grades 7 and 8: English-language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, human growth and development, physical education, music, visual art, family and consumer education, career education, and technology education. Instruction in the following areas shall include the contributions and perspectives of persons with disabilities, both men and women, and persons from diverse racial and ethnic groups, and shall be designed to eliminate career and employment stereotypes.

In implementing the junior high program standards, the following general curriculum definitions shall be used.

*a. English-language arts.* Same definition as in 12.5(3)“a” with the exclusion of handwriting.

*b. Social studies.* Social studies instruction shall include citizenship education, history and social sciences. Democratic beliefs and values, problem-solving skills, and social and political participation skills shall be incorporated. Instruction shall encompass history, economics, geography, government including American citizenship, behavioral sciences, and the cultures of other peoples and nations. Strategies for continued development of positive self-perceptions shall be infused.

*c. Mathematics.* Mathematics instruction shall include number and number relationships including ratio, proportion, and percent; number systems and number theory; estimation and computation; geometry; measurement; statistics and probability; and algebraic concepts of variables, patterns, and functions. This content shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and applications; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

*d. Science.* Same definition as in 12.5(3)“d.”

*e. Health.* Health instruction shall include personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; substance abuse and nonuse, encompassing the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and poisons on the human body; human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; and prevention and control of disease and the characteristics of communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted diseases and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

*f. Physical education.* Physical education shall include the physical fitness activities that increase cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility; sports and games; tumbling and gymnastics; rhythms and dance; water safety; leisure and lifetime activities.

*g. Music.* Same definition as in 12.5(3)“h” with the addition of using music as an avocation or vocation.

*h. Visual art.* Same definition as in 12.5(3)“i” with the addition of using visual arts as an avocation or vocation.

*i. Family and consumer education.* Family and consumer education instruction shall include the development of positive self-concept, understanding personal growth and development and relationships with peers and family members in the home, school and community, including men, women, minorities and persons with disabilities. Subject matter emphasizes the home and family, including parenting, child development, textiles and clothing, consumer and resource management, foods and nutrition, housing, and family and individual health. This subrule shall not apply to nonpublic schools.

j. *Career education.* Career education instruction shall include exploration of employment opportunities, experiences in career decision making, and experiences to help students integrate work values and work skills into their lives. This subrule shall not apply to nonpublic schools. However, nonpublic schools shall comply with subrule 12.5(7).

k. *Technology education.* Technology education instruction shall include awareness of technology and its impact on society and the environment; furthering students' career development by contributing to their scientific principles, technical information and skills to solve problems related to an advanced technological society; and orienting students to technologies which impact occupations in all six of the required service areas. The purpose of this instruction is to help students become technologically literate and become equipped with the necessary skills to cope with, live in, work in, and contribute to a highly technological society. This subrule shall not apply to nonpublic schools.

**12.5(5) High school program, grades 9-12.** In grades 9 through 12 a unit is a course or equivalent related components or partial units taught throughout the academic year as defined in subrule 12.5(18). The following shall be offered and taught as the minimum program: English-language arts, six units; social studies, five units; mathematics, six units as specified in 12.5(5)“c”; science, five units; health, one unit; physical education, one unit; fine arts, three units; foreign language, four units; and vocational education, 12 units as specified in 12.5(5)“i.”

In implementing the high school program standards, the following curriculum standards shall be used.

a. *English-language arts (six units).* English-language arts instruction shall include the following communication processes: speaking; listening; reading; writing; viewing; and visual expression and nonverbal communication. Instruction shall incorporate language learning and creative, logical, and critical thinking. The program shall encompass communication processes and skills; written composition; speech; debate; American, English, and world literature; creative dramatics; and journalism.

b. *Social studies (five units).* Social studies instruction shall include citizenship education, history, and the social sciences. Instruction shall encompass the history of the United States and the history and cultures of other peoples and nations including the analysis of persons, events, issues, and historical evidence reflecting time, change, and cause and effect. Instruction in United States government shall include an overview of American government through the study of the United States Constitution, the bill of rights, the federal system of government, and the structure and relationship between the national, state, county, and local governments; and voter education including instruction in statutes and procedures, voter registration requirements, the use of paper ballots and voting machines in the election process, and the method of acquiring and casting an absentee ballot. Students' knowledge of the Constitution and the bill of rights shall be assessed. Economics shall include comparative and consumer studies in relation to the market and command economic systems. Geography shall include the earth's physical and cultural features, their spatial arrangement and interrelationships, and the forces that affect them. Sociology, psychology, and anthropology shall include the scientific study of the individual and group behavior(s) reflecting the impact of these behaviors on persons, groups, society, and the major institutions in a society. Democratic beliefs and values, problem-solving skills, and social and political skills shall be incorporated. All students in grades nine through twelve must, as a condition of graduation, complete a minimum of one-half unit of United States government and one unit of United States history and receive instruction in the government of Iowa.

c. *Mathematics (six units).* Mathematics instruction shall include:

(1) Four sequential units which are preparatory to postsecondary educational programs. These units shall include strands in algebra, geometry, trigonometry, statistics, probability, and discrete mathematics. Mathematical concepts, operations, and applications shall be included for each of these strands. These strands shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and structure; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

(2) Two additional units shall be taught. These additional units may include mathematical content as identified in, but not limited to, paragraphs 12.5(3)“c,” 12.5(4)“c,” and 12.5(5)“c”(1). These units are to accommodate the locally identified needs of the students in the school or school district. This content shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and structure; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

*d. Science (five units).* Science instruction shall include biological, earth, and physical science, including physics and chemistry. Full units of chemistry and physics shall be taught but may be offered in alternate years. All science instruction shall incorporate hands-on process skills; scientific knowledge; the application of the skills and knowledge to students and society; conservation of natural resources; and environmental awareness.

*e. Health (one unit).* Health instruction shall include personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; human growth and development; substance abuse and nonuse; emotional and social health; health resources; and prevention and control of disease, including sexually transmitted diseases and acquired immune deficiency syndrome, current crucial health issues, human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships.

*f. Physical education (one unit).* Physical education shall include the physical fitness activities that increase cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and flexibility; sports and games; tumbling and gymnastics; rhythms and dance; water safety; leisure and lifetime activities.

All physically able students shall be required to participate in the program for a minimum of one-eighth unit during each semester they are enrolled except as otherwise provided in this paragraph. A twelfth-grade student may be excused from this requirement by the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled under one of the following circumstances:

(1) The student is enrolled in a cooperative, work-study, or other educational program authorized by the school which requires the student's absence from the school premises during the school day.

(2) The student is enrolled in academic courses not otherwise available.

(3) An organized and supervised athletic program which requires at least as much time of participation per week as one-eighth unit of physical education.

Students in grades nine through eleven may be excused from the physical education requirement in order to enroll in academic courses not otherwise available to the student if the board of directors of the school district in which the school is located, or the authorities in charge of the school, if the school is a nonpublic school, determine that students from the school may be permitted to be excused from the physical education requirement.

A student may be excused by the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled, in consultation with the student's counselor, for up to one semester, trimester, or the equivalent of a semester or trimester, per year if the parent or guardian of the student requests in writing that the student be excused from the physical education requirement. The student seeking to be excused from the physical education requirement must, at some time during the period for which the excuse is sought, be a participant in an organized and supervised athletic program which requires at least as much time of participation per week as one-eighth unit of physical education.

The student's parent or guardian must request the excuse in writing. The principal shall inform the superintendent that the student has been excused.

*g. Fine arts (three units).* Fine arts instruction shall include at least two of the following:

(1) Dance. Dance instruction shall encompass developing basic movement skills; elementary movement concepts; study of dance forms and dance heritage; participating in dance; and evaluating dance as a creative art; and using dance as an avocation or vocation.

(2) Music. Music instruction shall include skills, knowledge, and attitudes and the singing and playing of music; listening to and using music; reading and writing music; recognizing the value of the world's musical heritage; respecting individual musical aspirations and values; preparing for consuming, performing, or composing; and using music as an avocation or vocation.

(3) Theatre. Theatre instruction shall encompass developing the internal and external resources used in the theatre process; creating theatre through artistic collaboration; relating theatre to its social context; forming aesthetic judgments; and using theatre as an avocation or vocation.

(4) Visual art. Visual art instruction shall include developing concepts and values about natural and created environments; critiquing works of art; evaluating relationships between art and societies; analyzing, abstracting, and synthesizing visual forms to express ideas; making art; and using visual art as an avocation or vocation.

*h. Foreign language (four units).* The foreign language program shall be a four-unit sequence of uninterrupted study in at least one language. Foreign language instruction shall include listening comprehension appropriate to the level of instruction; rateable oral proficiency; reading comprehension appropriate to the level of instruction; writing proficiency appropriate to the level of instruction and cultural awareness.

All high schools shall offer and teach the first two units of the sequence. The third and fourth units must be offered. However, the department of education may, on an annual basis, waive the third and fourth unit requirements upon the request of the board. The board must document that a licensed/certificated teacher was employed and assigned a schedule that would have allowed students to enroll, that the class was properly scheduled, that students were aware of the course offerings, and that no students enrolled.

*i. Vocational education—school districts (three units each in at least four of the six service areas).* A minimum of three sequential units, of which only one may be a core unit, shall be taught in four of the following six service areas: agricultural education, business and office education, health occupations education, home economics education, industrial education, and marketing education. The instruction shall be competency-based; shall provide a base of knowledge which will prepare students for entry level employment, additional on-the-job training, and postsecondary education within their chosen field; shall be articulated with postsecondary programs of study, including apprenticeship programs; shall reinforce basic academic skills; shall include the contributions and perspectives of persons with disabilities, both men and women, and persons from diverse racial and ethnic groups. Vocational core courses may be used in more than one vocational service area. Multioccupations may be used to complete a sequence in more than one vocational service area; however, a core course(s) and multioccupations cannot be used in the same sequence. If a district elects to use multioccupations to meet the requirements in more than one service area, documentation must be provided to indicate that a sufficient variety of quality training stations be available to allow students to develop occupational competencies. A district may apply for a waiver if an innovative plan for meeting the instructional requirement for the standard is submitted to and approved by the director of the department of education.

The instructional programs also shall comply with the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 258 relating to vocational education. Advisory committee/councils designed to assist vocational education planning and evaluation shall be composed of public members with emphasis on persons representing business, agriculture, industry, and labor. The membership of local advisory committees/councils will fairly represent each gender and minority residing in the school district. The accreditation status of a school district failing to comply with the provisions of this subrule shall be governed by 281—subrule 46.7(10), paragraph “g.”

(1) A service area is the broad category of instruction in the following occupational cluster areas (definitions are those used in these rules):

(2) "Agricultural education programs" prepare individuals for employment in agriculture-related occupations. Such programs encompass the study of applied sciences and business management principles, as they relate to agriculture. Agricultural education focuses on, but is not limited to, study in horticulture, forestry, conservation, natural resources, agricultural products and processing, production of food and fiber, aquaculture and other agricultural products, mechanics, sales and service, economics marketing, and leadership development.

(3) "Business and office education programs" prepare individuals for employment in varied occupations involving such activities as planning, organizing, directing, and controlling all business office systems and procedures. Instruction offered includes such activities as preparing, transcribing, systematizing, preserving communications; analyzing financial records; receiving and disbursing money; gathering, processing and distributing information; and performing other business and office duties.

(4) "Health occupations education programs" prepare individuals for employment in a variety of occupations concerned with providing care in the areas of wellness, prevention of disease, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. Instruction offered encompasses varied activities in such areas as dental science, medical science, diagnostic services, treatment therapy, patient care areas, rehabilitation services, record keeping, emergency care, and health education. Many occupations in this category require licensing or credentialing to practice, or to use a specific title.

(5) "Home economics education programs" encompass two categories of instructional programs:

1. "Consumer and family science" programs may be taught to prepare individuals for a multiple role of homemaker and wage earner and may include such content areas as food and nutrition; consumer education; family living and parenthood; child development and guidance; family and individual health; housing and home management; and clothing and textiles.

2. "Home economics occupations programs" prepare individuals for paid employment in such home economics-related occupations as child care aide/assistant, food production management and services, and homemaker/home health aide.

(6) "Industrial education programs" encompass two categories of instructional programs—industrial technology and trade and industrial. Industrial technology means an applied discipline designed to promote technological literacy which provides knowledge and understanding of the impact of technology including its organizations, techniques, tools, and skills to solve practical problems and extend human capabilities in areas such as construction, manufacturing, communication, transportation, power and energy. Trade and industrial programs prepare individuals for employment in such areas as protective services, construction trades, mechanics and repairers, precision production, transportation, and graphic communications. Instruction includes regular systematic classroom activities, followed by experiential learning with the most important processes, tools, machines, management ideas, and impacts of technology.

(7) "Marketing education programs" prepare individuals for marketing occupations, including merchandising and management—those activities which make products and services readily available to consumers and business. Instruction stresses the concept that marketing is the bridge between production (including the creation of services and ideas) and consumption. These activities are performed by retailers, wholesalers, and businesses providing services in for-profit and not-for-profit business firms.

(8) "Sequential unit" applies to an integrated offering, directly related to the educational and occupational skills preparation of individuals for jobs and preparation for postsecondary education. Sequential units provide a logical framework for the instruction offered in a related occupational area and do not require prerequisites for enrollment. A unit is defined in subrule 12.5(18).

(9) “Competency” is a learned student performance statement which can be accurately repeated and measured. Instruction is based on incumbent worker-validated statements of learner results (competencies) which clearly describe what skills the students will be able to demonstrate as a result of the instruction. Competencies function as the basis for building the instructional program to be offered. Teacher evaluation of students, based upon their ability to perform the competencies, is an integral part of a competency-based system.

(10) “Minimum competency lists” contain competencies validated by statewide technical committees, composed of representatives from appropriate businesses, industries, agriculture, and organized labor. These lists contain essential competencies which lead to entry level employment and are not intended to be the only competencies learned. Districts will choose one set of competencies per service area upon which to build their program or follow the process detailed in 281—subrule 46.7(2) to develop local competencies.

(11) “Clinical experience” involves direct instructor supervision in the actual workplace, so that the learner has the opportunity to apply theory and to perfect skills taught in the classroom and laboratory.

“Field training” is an applied learning experience in a nonclassroom environment under the supervision of an instructor.

“Lab training” is experimentation, practice or simulation by students under the supervision of an instructor.

“On-the-job training” is a cooperative work experience planned and supervised by a teacher-coordinator and the supervisor in the employment setting.

(12) “Coring” is an instructional design whereby competencies common to two or more different vocational service areas are taught as one course offering. Courses shall be no longer than one unit of instruction. Course(s) may be placed wherever appropriate within the program offered. This offering may be acceptable as a unit or partial unit in more than one vocational program to meet the standard.

(13) “Articulation” is the process of mutually agreeing upon competencies and performance levels transferable between institutions and programs for advanced placement or credit in a vocational program. An articulation agreement is the written document which explains the decisions agreed upon and the process used by the institution to grant advanced placement or credit.

(14) “Multioccupational courses” combine on-the-job training in any of the occupational areas with the related classroom instruction. The instructor provides the related classroom instruction and coordinates the training with the employer at the work site. A multioccupational course may only be used to complete a sequence in more than one vocational service area if competencies from the appropriate set of minimum competencies are a part of the related instruction.

j. *Vocational education/nonpublic schools (five units).* A nonpublic school which provides an educational program that includes grades 9 through 12 shall offer and teach five units of occupational education subjects, which may include, but are not limited to, programs, services, and activities which prepare students for employment in business or office occupations, trade and industrial occupations, consumer and family sciences or home economics occupations, agricultural occupations, marketing occupations, and health occupations. By July 1, 1993, instruction shall be competency-based, articulated with postsecondary programs of study, and may include field, laboratory, or on-the-job training.

**12.5(6)** *Physical education and health courses exemption.* A pupil shall not be required to enroll in either physical education or health courses if the pupil’s parent or guardian files a written statement with the school principal that the course conflicts with the pupil’s religious beliefs.

**12.5(7) Career education.** The board shall provide a comprehensive career education program. Curricular and cocurricular teaching and learning experiences from the prekindergarten level through grade 12 shall be provided for all students. The career education program shall be infused into the total education program. The program shall include, but need not be limited to, awareness of self in relation to others and the needs of society; exploration of employment opportunities; experiences in personal decision making; and experiences to help students integrate work values and work skills into their lives. In the implementation of this standard, the board shall comply with Iowa Code section 280.9.

**12.5(8) Board's responsibility for ensuring multicultural, nonsexist approaches to educational programs.** The board shall establish a policy to ensure the school is free from discriminatory practices in its educational programs. In developing or revising this policy, parents, students, instructional and noninstructional staff, and community members shall be involved. In addition, each board shall adopt a written plan, to be evaluated and updated at least every five years, for achieving and maintaining a multicultural, nonsexist educational program. A copy of the plan shall be on file in the administrative office of the school. The plan shall include:

*a.* Multicultural approaches to the educational program. These shall be defined as processes which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups to society. Special emphasis shall be placed on Asian Americans, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, and the disabled. The program shall provide equal opportunity for all participants regardless of race, color, marital status, national origin, religion, or disability.

*b.* Nonsexist approaches to the educational program. These shall be defined as processes which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of men and women to society. The program shall reflect the wide variety of roles open to both men and women and shall provide equal opportunity to both sexes.

The plan shall also include specific goals and objectives, with implementation timelines for each component of the educational program; specific provisions for the infusion of multicultural, nonsexist concepts into each area of the curriculum developed under the provisions of subrule 12.5(16); a description of the in-service activities planned for all staff members on multicultural, nonsexist education; and evidence of systematic input by men and women, minority groups, and the disabled in developing and implementing the plan. In schools where no minority students are enrolled, minority group resource persons shall be utilized at least annually. A description of a periodic, ongoing system to monitor and evaluate the plan shall also be included.

**12.5(9) Special education.** The board of each school district shall provide special education programs and services for its resident children which comply with rules of the state board of education implementing Iowa Code chapters 256, 256B, 273, and 280.

**12.5(10) Technology in the curriculum.** The board shall adopt a plan for the efficient and effective use of technology in the instructional program. The plan shall provide for the understanding and use of current technology by staff and students and shall include a procedure to review the utilization of technology as a teaching and learning tool.

**12.5(11) Global education.** The board shall adopt a plan which incorporates global perspectives into all areas and levels of the educational program so that students have the opportunity to acquire a realistic perspective on world issues, problems, and prospects for an awareness of the relationship between an individual's self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world. The plan shall include procedures for a review of its effectiveness.



**12.5(12) *Provisions for gifted and talented students.*** The board shall have a program to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. The program shall include valid and systematic procedures, employing multiple criteria, for identifying gifted and talented students including ethnic and language diverse students if such students are enrolled; provisions for curricular programming to meet the needs of identified gifted and talented students; support services, including materials and staff, to ensure that a qualitatively differentiated program is provided; and a procedure for annual review and evaluation for the purpose of program improvement.

**12.5(13) *Provisions for at-risk students.*** The board shall have a plan to identify and provide special assistance to students who have difficulty mastering the language, academic, cultural, and social skills necessary to reach the educational levels of which they are capable. The plan shall accommodate students whose aspirations and achievement may be negatively affected by stereotypes linked to race, national origin, language background, gender, income, family status, and disability.

The plan shall include strategies for identifying at-risk students. These objectives shall be translated into performance objectives for all school personnel. The plan shall also include provisions for in-service training for school personnel; strategies and activities for involving and working with parents; provisions for monitoring the behavioral, social, and academic improvement of at-risk students; provisions for appropriate counseling services; strategies for coordinating school programs and community-based support services; and maintenance of integrated educational environments in compliance with federal and state nondiscrimination legislation.

**12.5(14) *Educational program defined.*** The educational program is the entire offering of the school, including out-of-class activities and the sequence of subjects and activities. It is also referred to as the program of studies and activities.

**12.5(15) *Curriculum defined.*** Curriculum is all pupil experiences that take place under the guidance of the school. It describes both the school experiences of an individual pupil and the arrangement of a cluster of courses to be taken by groups of pupils having a common objective.

**12.5(16) *Curriculum development, review, and refinement.*** The board shall adopt a policy outlining its procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating its total curriculum. Each curriculum area shall have goals; suggested instructional activities, materials, and content; and expected student outcomes for each level of instruction. The policy shall identify valid, bias-free student assessment procedures and the process for monitoring student progress.

This policy shall include procedures and timelines for reviewing each instructional program, with attention given to interdisciplinary teaching of higher order thinking skills, learning skills, and communication skills.

**12.5(17) *Educational program form and content.*** The educational program, as adopted by the board, shall set forth the administrative measures and the sequence of learning situations which provide pupils with well-articulated, developmental learning experiences from the date of school entrance until high school graduation.

**12.5(18) *Unit.*** A unit is a course which meets one of the following criteria: It is taught for at least 200 minutes per week for 36 weeks; it is taught for the equivalent of 120 hours of instruction; or it is an equated requirement as a part of an innovative program filed as prescribed in subrule 12.1(6). A fractional unit shall be calculated in a manner consistent with this standard. Multiple section courses taught at the same time in a single classroom situation by one teacher do not meet this unit definition for the assignment of a unit of credit with the exception that the third and fourth years of a foreign language may be taught at the same time by one teacher in a single classroom situation each yielding a unit of credit.

**12.5(19) *Credit.*** A student shall receive a credit or a partial credit upon successful completion of a course which meets one of the criteria in subrule 12.5(18). The board may award credit on a performance basis through the administration of an examination, provided the examination covers the content ordinarily included in the regular course.

**12.5(20) *Subject offering.*** A subject shall be regarded as offered when the teacher of the subject has met the licensure and endorsement standards of the state board of educational examiners for that subject; instructional materials and facilities for that subject have been provided; and pupils have been informed, based on their aptitudes, interests, and abilities, about possible value of the subject.

A subject shall be regarded as taught only when pupils are instructed in it in accordance with all applicable standards outlined herein. Subjects which the law requires schools to offer and teach shall be made available during the school day as defined in subrules 12.2(2), 12.2(3), and 12.2(4).

**12.5(21) *Guidance program.*** Each board operating a prekindergarten through grade 12 or kindergarten through grade 12 program shall provide an articulated sequential elementary-secondary guidance program to assist students with their personal, educational, and career development. Boards operating less than a full elementary-secondary program shall provide a sequential guidance program covering all grade levels operated. The program shall involve not only counselors but also instructional and noninstructional staff, students, parents, and community members. Facilities offering both visual and auditory privacy for counseling shall be provided. Properly licensed/certificated staff shall be employed at all program levels.

**12.5(22) *School media center and required staff.*** The board shall establish and operate a media services program to support the total curriculum. Each attendance center shall have a media center except that attendance centers sharing a physical facility could have a single media center. The board shall adopt a policy and procedure for selection, replacement, gift acceptance, weeding, and reconsideration of school media center and text materials. The collection shall foster a nonsexist, multicultural approach for curriculum studies and individual interests. The budget for each media center shall include funds for replacing and updating materials.

Each media center shall be supervised by a licensed/certified media specialist who works with students, teachers, and administrators. A full range of information sources, associated equipment, and services from the media center staff shall be available to students and the faculty. Each media center shall be accessible to students throughout the school day. The school or school district shall develop and implement a curriculum guide covering all grade levels operated for instruction and reinforcement of information search and media skills integrated with classroom instruction.

#### DIVISION VI ACTIVITY PROGRAM

**281—12.6(256) *Activity program.*** The following standards shall apply to the activity program of accredited schools and school districts.

**12.6(1) *General guidelines.*** Each board shall sponsor a pupil activity program sufficiently broad and balanced to offer opportunities for all pupils to participate. The program shall be supervised by qualified professional staff and shall be designed to meet the needs and interests and challenge the abilities of all pupils consistent with their individual stages of development; contribute to the physical, mental, athletic, civic, social, moral, and emotional growth of all pupils; offer opportunities for both individual and group activities; be integrated with the instructional program; and provide balance so a limited number of activities will not be perpetuated at the expense of others.

**12.6(2) *Supervised intramural sports.*** If the board sponsors a voluntary program of supervised intramural sports for pupils in grades seven through twelve, qualified personnel and adequate facilities, equipment, and supplies shall be provided. Middle school grades below grade seven may also participate.

DIVISION VII  
STAFF DEVELOPMENT

**281—12.7(256) Staff development.** The following standards shall apply to staff development for accredited schools and school districts.

**12.7(1) Staff development program.** The board shall have a plan for staff development. The plan shall provide for the professional development needs of the instructional professional staff, the noninstructional professional staff, the support staff, and educational aides. The plan shall include general goals for a three-year period and specific objectives and activities for the current school year.

**12.7(2) Budget for staff development.** The board shall annually budget specified funds to implement the plan required in subrule 12.7(1).

DIVISION VIII  
EXEMPTION PROCESS

**281—12.8(256) Standards exemption process.** Accredited schools engaged in comprehensive school transformation efforts and seeking approval for an exemption from the educational standards shall submit a plan on or before January 1 preceding the beginning of the school year for which the exemption is sought. The exemption request may be approved for a time period not to exceed three years. Annual progress reports shall be made to the department of education for the period of time covered by the approved exemption request. An extension of the exemption beyond the three-year period may be approved by the department of education based upon the demonstrated success of the program. The department shall notify the school of the approval or denial of the exemption request not later than March 1.

**12.8(1) Program plan.** At a minimum, the program plan shall include:

- a. A description of the school's transformation plan including, but not limited to, new structures, methodologies, and creative approaches designed to help students achieve at higher levels.
- b. Identification of the standard or standards from which the exemption is being sought, including a statement of the reasons for requesting the exemption from the standard or standards.
- c. A rationale which includes educational research and best practice evidence that supports the request for the exemption.
- d. A statement of the goals and objectives for the program plan.
- e. Discussion of the focus on the improvement of student achievement and the attainment of student achievement goals under Iowa Code sections 280.12 and 280.18.
- f. Identification of assessment methods to be used in determining the success of the program and the impact on student achievement.
- g. Identification of a method for periodic demonstration that student achievement will not be lessened by the granting of the exemption.
- h. Description of the relationship between the district's Phase III plan and the comprehensive school transformation plan.
- i. Discussion of the administration and implementation of the plan, including the use of personnel, facilities, time, techniques, and activities.
- j. Plans for periodic reports to the department of education and the community.

**12.8(2) Review criteria.** The department of education will utilize the following criteria in the review and approval of all requests for exemptions from the educational standards received pursuant to subrule 12.1(8).

- a.* The plan includes evidence of shared direction based on needs of all students as follows:
  - (1) Is developed collaboratively with staff and community.
  - (2) Is meaningful to the school as an organization and to the employees of the school.
  - (3) Is based on information about students' needs as determined by local and regional demographics of socioeconomic and economic conditions, employment opportunities, and family circumstances and how students learn.
  - (4) Illustrates that expectations for students are expressed in clear and meaningful ways.
- b.* The plan illustrates that the school gathers evidence of success including, but not limited to, the following:
  - (1) Specific performance measures or standards are identified for graduation and for at least one interval at the elementary level and at least one interval at the middle school level and are appropriately assessed utilizing multiple assessment measures.
  - (2) The student achievement data is collected, analyzed and reported internally.
  - (3) Evidence of success or the results are reported both internally to staff and externally to parents and members of the community to reinforce or modify direction.
- c.* The plan includes evidence that the school invests in its staff by providing time and support for planning, staff development, and analysis of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes.
- d.* The plan reflects change that is substantive and comprehensive, emerges from the school site, is designed to make the system relevant, is an integral part of efforts at meeting needs or goals, is consistent with emerging philosophies on restructuring and transformation, and focuses on improvement of student achievement and the attainment of student achievement goals under Iowa Code sections 280.12 and 280.18.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 256.11 and 280.23.

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